
XXV. EXTRACTS *from the* MINUTE-BOOK *of the* LINNEAN
SOCIETY *of* LONDON.

May 5, MR. LAMBERT exhibited a specimen of the single-
1807. flowered *Pæonia suffruticosa*, which was then in bloom,
for the first time in Britain, in the collection of Lady
Amelia Hume.

June 16. A letter to the Secretary from Mr. Power of Market
Bosworth, Leicestershire, was read, describing the man-
ner in which the Common Garden Snail *Helix hortensis*,
and the Slugs *Limax ater* and *maximus*, feed on the
Common Dew Worm or Earth Worm *Lumbricus ter-
restris*, when dead or dying. This is performed in the
night; and as Mr. Power observed these animals would
not attack a living worm, he attributes it to the prickles
on its surface, which the worm, when in health and vi-
gour, has a power of erecting, as well probably for de-
fence against snails, as for the purpose of drawing
straws, &c. into its retreat.

Nov. 17. The following account from Mr. George Milne, F.L.S.
respecting the effect of the imagination of a female cat
on the foetus in the womb, was read.

“ One afternoon in the month of May last, while my-
self

self and family were at tea, a young female cat, which, on account of extreme playfulness, had become a great favourite, was lying on the hearth. She was pregnant for the second time, and had arrived, as nearly as I can recollect, at the middle period of gestation. A servant handing the tea-kettle, or doing some office which led her to pass between the fire and the table, trod very heavily on the creature's tail. She screamed most frightfully, and ran out of the room; and from the nature of the noise which she emitted, it was evident that a considerable degree of terror mingled with the sense of injury. But from a circumstance so extremely common no extraordinary result was expected, and the poor cat's tail was no more thought of until the final period of gestation, when we were surprised with the phenomenon which has given occasion to this communication. She dropped five kittens; one of which, exactly resembling herself, was apparently perfect; but the other four had the tail most remarkably distorted. About one third of the length, reckoning from the base, there was a *nodus* equal in size to a very large pea, or about twice as thick as the tail itself; the remaining portion being turned on one side at an angle nearly approaching to a right angle: and what may deserve notice, all of them turned the same way, towards the left side. I was urged to rear one of these as a curiosity; but, conceiving that it might grow up rather a disgusting object, I had the whole destroyed; preserving only the one which appeared to be perfect. That one I kept about a month; when it was seized, as well as the

the

the mother, with a disorder which greatly enfeebled it; and to save the parent I destroyed the offspring. But it was previously discovered that this also had the tail distorted and turned aside at a considerable angle, although free from the knot which distinguished the other four."